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ABSTRACT

This module regarding support services available for special needs students in vocational education programs in Missouri identifies the following support personnel: vocational resource educators; basic skills instructors; special needs counselors, counselors and placement specialists; vocational evaluators; supplemental teachers; vocational preparation teachers; vocational teacher aides; interpreters for the deaf; and readers and notetakers. It describes the services that can be funded under the Perkins Act and the roles, functions, and activities of the support personnel listed above. A list of 13 state and national support services for teachers, parents, and students provides addresses. Ten references are included. (CML)

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TITLE: SUPPORT FOR SPECIAL NEEDS STUDENTS IN MISSOURI

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ABSTRACT: Information is provided regarding support services available for special needs students in vocational education programs.

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SUPPORT PERSONNEL FOR SPECIAL NEEDS STUDENTS

Overview

Vocational education enhances student success when carefully targeted support services are made available. To ensure that special needs individuals have equal access and are successful in vocational programs, the Carl D. Perkins Vocational Education Act (P.L. 98-524) provides for a variety of support services for secondary, postsecondary and adult handicapped and disadvantaged students. The main function of these support services is to work with teachers and students to provide the special needs student a positive learning environment. Support personnel include vocational resource educators, basic skills instructors, special needs counselors (counselors and placement specialists), vocational evaluators, supplemental teachers, vocational preparation teachers,vocational teacher aides, interpreters for the deaf, and readers/notetakers.

Frequently Asked Questions

Q. WHAT SERVICES WILL P.L. 98-524 FUND?

A. The Missouri Planner's Guide states that P.L. 98-524 (Title II, Part A) funds may be used in the following areas to support handicapped and disadvantaged students in vocational education:

- *Professional staff salaries; special needs counselors, vocational evaluators, basic skills instructors, vocational resource educators, and supplemental teachers;
- *Publications for notification and provision of information;
- *Aide salaries;
- *Clerical salaries;
- *Travel - for direct student services at the local level;
- *Equipment;
- *Career awareness and exploration materials;
- *Assessment materials;
- *Assessment supplies;
- *Supplies and materials to assist special needs students in completion of a vocational education program;
- *Special equipment/equipment modifications essential for handicapped students to enroll and successfully complete a vocational education training program; and
- *Other unique services and activities may be submitted for approval.

Q. WHAT IS A SPECIAL NEEDS COUNSELOR?

A. The Missouri Vocational Planner's Guide lists services and activities which may be funded. One area specified by the Act inclucludes Guidance, Counseling, Career Development, and Placement. These services must be administered by a professionally trained counselor with a Missouri Secondary Counseling Certificate.

Q. WHAT IS THE PRIMARY ROLE OF THE SPECIAL NEEDS COUNSELOR?

A. P.L. 98-524 has greatly affected the roles and responsibilities of counselors. Counselors supported with the Act's set aside funds have primary job duties of career guidance and counseling activities. Career guidance and counseling is defined in the Act as those programs (1) which pertain to the body of the subject matter and selected techniques and methods organized for the individuals' development in the following areas: career planning, career decisionmaking, placement skills, and knowledge and understanding of local, state, national, occupational, educational, and labor market needs, trends, and opportunities, and (2) which assist them in making and implementing informed educational and occupational choices.

Q. WHAT ROLE DOES A SPECIAL NEEDS COUNSELOR PLAY IN ASSESSMENT?

A. P.L. 98-524 states that the interests, abilities, and special needs of each handicapped and disadvantaged student are to be assessed with respect to successfully completing a vocational education program. A special needs counselor may aid in an informal assessment of a student by reviewing previous records, interviewing the student, parents, and teachers and administering interest and/or aptitude tests. The results are to be used in the formulation of a realistic vocational education plan.

Other than vocational assessment and career development activities, counselors may participate in activities such as dropout prevention, occupational orientation, outreach, placement and follow-up, and other unique needs identified by the eligible recipient (the school receiving the Perkins dollars).

Q. DOES THE SPECIAL NEEDS COUNSELOR SERVE ALL STUDENTS?

A. The role of the special needs counselor is to serve disadvantaged students when the existing counseling staff can not provide the necessary services. The additional counseling personnel cannot be used to satisfy the counselor/student ratio requirement for school classification purposes. Some special needs counselors may also have responsibilities for handicapped students.

Q. WHAT ARE THE RESOURCES WITH WHICH A SPECIAL NEEDS COUNSELOR SHOULD BE FAMILIAR?

A. Two manuals developed by Missouri LINC might be particularly useful to special needs counselors. Guidance Activities for Special Needs Students may give counselors ideas and activities to work with special needs students. Many group activities are included, as well as individual counseling activities. The Vocational Special Needs Counselor Manual is a guide designed for new special needs counselors and can be

a useful reference tool for veteran counselors. Both are available from the Instructional Materials Laboratory, 10 London Hall,University of Missouri-Columbia, Columbia, MO 65211.

Q. WHAT IS A VOCATIONAL EVALUATOR?

A. A Vocational Evaluator is a specialist in the administration and interpretation of vocational assessment instruments during a formal vocational assessment process. He/she has special training in areas such as standardized tests, work samples, job modification, and task analysis. The reports generated from a formal vocational evaluation should be incorporated into the diagnostic summary of a handicapped student and utilized when developing IEP goals and objectives. A disadvantaged student's report is given to the counselor, kept in the permanent record and utilized to develop a vocational plan. Both reports are very helpful in making appropriate vocational class placement of students.

Q. HOW ARE VOCATIONAL EVALUATORS CERTIFIED?

A. Vocational evaluation may be performed by individuals with a Missouri Secondary Counselors Certificate or a Missouri Vocational Evaluation Certificate.

Q. WHAT MATERIALS ARE AVAILABLE FOR VOCATIONAL EVALUATOR?

A. The following manuals, available from the Instructional Materials Laboratory, may be useful to personnel doing formal or informal assessment:

ACCESS SKILLS: Generic Informal Assessment Instruments
ACCESS SKILLS: Employability and Study Skills
ACCESS SKILLS: Vocational Readiness Skills
Assessment: A Key to Appropriate Program Placement
Informal Assessment: A Handbook for LEAs
Career Assessment Instrument Resource Guide

Q. WHAT IS A VOCATIONAL RESOURCE EDUCATOR?

A. The vocational resource educator (VRE) fulfills the role of a facilitator in the mainstreaming process. He/she is responsible for helping handicapped students make a smooth transition into vocational programs as well as helping vocational instructors plan and implement appropriate educational programs. The VRE serves as a resource for teachers, students, parents, and the community. This role requires expertise in special education and vocational education, and above all, good communication and public relations skills.

As a facilitator, the vocational resource educator works with educational personnel in a variety of programs. The VRE assists in vocational program planning for students with

identify and utilize resources in the best possible way and assure the placement of handicapped students in appropriate jobs. In this capacity, the VRE works with the school's placement personnel to facilitate handicapped students' transition from school to work.

The VRE has direct responsibility to other staff members to provide services and/or resources which help them as they work directly with students who are handicapped. Because the VRE is a facilitator, the specific responsibilities are identified jointly with special education personnel and administrators, according to the needs of each school.

The role of the VRE requires that he/she serves as an advocate of students with handicaps in each of their environments - school, home, community. VREs have a primary responsibility to assure students and teachers that they have appropriate resources available so that their mutual success is facilitated.

Q. WHAT ARE SOME SPECIFIC VRE ACTIVITIES?

A. Possible activities of the VRE include: participation in the IEP development (secondary); coordination with the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (secondary, postsecondary and adult); facilitating placement in appropriate vocational classes; assisting the vocational director/dean/counselor in integrating students into the mainstream; working with sending schools to coordinate instructional goals; providing readers, interpreters, and notetakers; advising and assisting in curriculum modification needs; and serving as community/agency/parental liaison.

Q. WHAT CERTIFICATION DOES A VRE NEED?

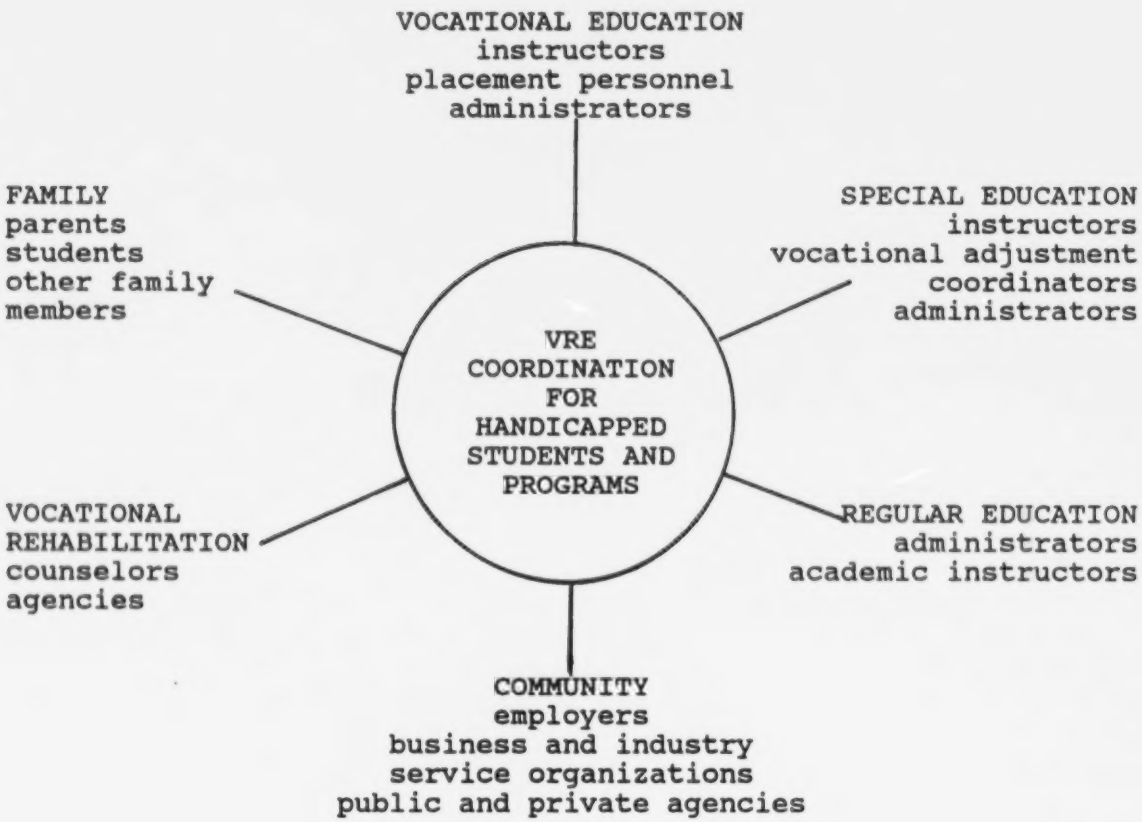
A. A VRE must have a Baccalaureate Degree as well as a Missouri teaching certificate in Vocational Education or special Education; or a Missouri Secondary Counseling Certificate.

Q. WHAT RESOURCES ARE AVAILABLE FOR VREs?

A. The Vocational Resource Educator Handbook, available from the Instructional Materials Laboratory, is an excellent resource for both new and veteran VREs. In addition, VREs should collect instructional catalogs and materials as well as become familiar with their local community resources.

Q. WHO ARE SOME OF THE PEOPLE WITH WHOM A VRE NEEDS TO COORDINATE AND WORK?

A. There are people from many sectors of the community that the VRE will want to link with in coordinating services to handicapped students, as the following diagram illustrates.



Source: Vocational Resource Educators Handbook, Missouri LINC, University of Missouri-Columbia (1986).

Q. WHAT IS BASIC SKILLS INSTRUCTION?

A. Basic skills instruction is another area of support services allowable through P.L. 98-524. These services are to facilitate student learning of academic skills related to vocational education programs.

Basic skills instruction includes instruction in mathematics, reading, and/or writing skills essential for the student to successfully complete a vocational education program. Basic skills instructors are particularly important for vocational students whose basic skills are inhibiting to their success in vocational programs. This instruction must be coordinated with the vocational teacher and be provided concurrently with

the student's enrollment in a vocational program. A cooperative relationship between the vocational teacher and the basic skills instructor is vital for the basic skills instruction program to be successful.

In 1988-89, Missouri initiated At-Risk Youth Programs which serve dropouts and potential dropouts in the area vocational schools. Basic skills instructors in these specialized programs can work with students on academic credit courses (English, social studies, science, math) as well as basic skills necessary for the success of the student in his/her vocational class. Basic skills instructors in at-risk programs are also involved with GED instruction for some students.

Q. HOW ARE BASIC SKILLS INSTRUCTORS CERTIFIED?

A. The basic skills instructor must have a minimum of a Baccalaureate Degree and a Missouri teaching certificate in Elementary Education or a Missouri secondary certificate in the area of basic skills to be taught.

Q. WHAT RESOURCES ARE AVAILABLE FOR BASIC SKILLS INSTRUCTORS?

A. The Basic Skills Instructor Manual is available through the Instructional Materials Laboratory. It is comparable to the other manuals written by Missouri LINC in that it guides new instructors in their roles and responsibilities and provides resources for both veteran and new basic skills instructors.

Q. WHAT IS THE ROLE OF THE SUPPLEMENTAL TEACHER?

A. The role of supplemental teachers is to assist vocational instructors in the provision of instruction, related to the occupation or occupations for which the students are in training or instruction necessary for students to benefit from such training.

Q. WHY ARE SUPPLEMENTAL TEACHERS NEEDED?

A. The assistance of supplemental teachers may be especially needed in programs that contain early entry handicapped or disadvantaged students. In situations where the local education agency can document the benefits for longer training, a student can enter a vocational training program early. "In no case should this occur before the student enters the ninth grade and/or has attained the age of fifteen years" (Vocational Planners Guide, 1986, pp.7, 12).

Besides early entry students there may be an increase of 11th and 12th grade handicapped and disadvantaged students enrolled in vocational programs at one time. Supplemental teachers can be assigned to more than one program at one time. Supplemental teachers can help vocational teachers provide the additional time required for handicapped and disadvantaged

students to gain sufficient competencies for entry level employment. Examples of such assistance include working directly with the student and vocational instructor in the regular classroom and pulling students out for a short period of time to work with them in a resource setting when extra assistance is needed or to assist the student on an individual basis in the vocational lab or classroom.

Q. HOW ARE SUPPLEMENTAL STAFF CERTIFIED?

A. Supplemental Professional Staff (teachers) must hold a Missouri vocational teaching certificate in the occupational area assigned or a Missouri teaching certificate in Industrial Arts.

Q. IS THERE A MANUAL TO HELP SUPPLEMENTAL TEACHERS?

A. Yes, Support for Vocational Special Needs Students: A Manual for Supplemental Professional Personnel, is available through the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, Division of Vocational Special Needs and Guidance Services, P.O. Box 480, Jefferson City, MO 65102.

Q. WHAT IS THE ROLE OF VOCATIONAL PREPARATION TEACHERS?

A. Vocational preparation is a class offered at some area vocational schools for the purpose of allowing tenth grade handicapped and/or disadvantaged students the opportunity to explore various career areas. Vocational preparation classes are really "separate programs" under the Carl D. Perkins Act, but the State of Missouri has allocated dollars to programs which are approved by the Vocational Special Needs and Guidance Section, Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (Missouri Planners Guide, 1988).

Vocational preparation teachers design a curriculum which enhances the learning of basic skills and prerequisite skills for the vocational programs offered at the area vocational schools. They often participate in the development of the IEP and give recommendations for appropriate vocational program placement.

Q. WHAT CERTIFICATION IS NECESSARY FOR A VOCATIONAL PREPARATION TEACHER?

A. Vocational preparation teachers usually hold an Industrial Arts certification or a vocational certificate appropriate to the type of vocational preparation class they are teaching.

Q. ARE THERE RESOURCES TO HELP VOCATIONAL PREPARATION TEACHERS?

A. The following manuals can be helpful to Vocational Preparation teachers in teaching the prerequisite skills for various vocational areas. These manuals are available through the Instructional Materials Laboratory.

*ACCESS SKILLS: *Vocational Readiness Skills for Agriculture*
*ACCESS SKILLS: *Vocational Readiness Skills for Business & Office*
*ACCESS SKILLS: *Vocational Readiness Skills for Health Occupations*
*ACCESS SKILLS: *Vocational Readiness Skills Marketing/Coop Education*
*ACCESS SKILLS: *Vocational Readiness Skills Occupational Home Economics*
*ACCESS SKILLS: *Vocational Readiness Skills Trade & Technical I*
*ACCESS SKILLS: *Vocational Readiness Skills Trade & Technical II*

Q. ARE THERE SUPPORT SERVICES AVAILABLE FOR HEARING AND VISION IMPAIRED?

A. Additional support services allowable through P.L. 98-524 funds are Interpreters for the Deaf, and Readers and Notetakers.

The role of these personnel is to assist students in successfully completing appropriate vocational education programs. Such services will facilitate skill development and normal progress in vocational education programs.

Q. WILL P.L. 98-524 HELP SUPPORT TEACHER AIDE POSITIONS?

A. Yes, Vocational Teacher Aides are personnel who assist the vocational teacher with the instructional process in the classroom and laboratory. The specific responsibilities may vary depending on the nature of the course, the students enrolled in the course, the expertise/education of the aide, etc. The aide, while not a teacher, can enhance the instructional process directly and indirectly. The key is making optimal use of the aide's skills to improve the skill development of special needs students.

Q. ARE THERE OTHER SCHOOL PERSONNEL <u>NOT</u> FUNDED WITH P.L. 98-524 FUNDS WITH RESPONSIBILITY FOR SERVING HANDICAPPED STUDENTS ?

A. The vocational adjustment coordinator (VAC) works in providing handicapped students the appropriate environment, activities, job training stations, and carefully supervised places of employment.

The VAC coordinates with the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation to implement the Cooperative School Work Program.

VACs are responsible for five goals in order to develop a successful Cooperative School Work Program. The VAC Handbook (1988) identifies the following goals for a VAC:

*Develop a communication network;
*Cooperate in the development of the IEP;
*Facilitate student progress;
*Develop training sites and implement on-the-job training; and
*Interface with the vocational rehabilitation counselor.

Q. WHAT CERTIFICATION IS REQUIRED FOR A VAC?

A. A VAC must have a teaching certificate in a Special Education area through the Division of Special Education.

Q. HOW CAN THE VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION COUNSELOR (VRC) BE OF ASSISTANCE?

A. The VRC has the responsibility to assist handicapped students in obtaining employment and/or training by planning, organizing and providing professional rehabilitation services. The VRC may perform a number of services for the handicapped student in conjunction with the VAC and VRE. The VRC as a support resource may provide:

*Screening interviews or eligibility;
*Interpretations of medical, psychological, social, educational and employment information;
*Arrangements for vocational evaluations;
*An Individualized Written Rehabilitation Plan;
*Arrangements for rehabilitation services; and
*Placement and follow-up employment.

Q. WHAT ARE SOME EXAMPLES OF SUPPORT SERVICES AVAILABLE WITHIN THE COMMUNITY?

A. Educators and resource staff should be aware of available services in the community. Some of these support services include:

*Employer advisory committee;
*Business and industry;
*Service organizations;
*Public and private agencies (i.e., Vocational Rehabilitation);
*Community colleges
*Post secondary vocational schools;
*Vocational evaluation centers;
*Job Service, Division of Employment Security;
*Chamber of Commerce;
*Governor's Committee on Employment of the Handicapped.

Q. WHAT OTHER SUPPORT SERVICES ARE AVAILABLE TO TEACHERS, PARENTS AND/OR STUDENTS?

A. Many supportive services are available to teachers, parents and students on the national and state level. These services help prepare special needs learners for the transition to the world of work. Interagency collaborative and cooperative planning by individuals and agencies assist to maximize the vocational potential of special needs learners. A sampling of these state and national support services is listed below:

Missouri LINC
401 E. Stewart Road
University of Missouri
Columbia, MO 65211

Special Education Dissemination Center
401 E. Stewart Road
University of Missouri
Columbia, MO 65211

Instructional Materials Laboratory
10 London Hall
University of Missouri
Columbia, MO 65211

Technology Center for Special Education
Rm. 24, School of Education
University of Missouri
5100 Rockhill Road
Kansas City, MO 64110

Governor's Committee on Employment of the Handicapped
P.O. Box 1668
Jefferson City, MO 65102

Project ACCESS
Rm. 211, Professional Building
Southwest Missouri State University
901 S. National
Springfield, MO 65804-0088

MPACT
Parent to Parent Training
1722 W. South Glenstone, Suite 125
Springfield, MO 65804
or
625 North Euclid, Suite 225
St. Louis, MO 63108

Division of Vocational Rehabilitation
2401 East McCarty St.
Jefferson City, MO 65101

American Printing House for the Blind, Inc.
1839 Frankfort Avenue
P.O. Box 6085
Louisville, KY 40206-0085

Office of Special Education & Rehabilitation Services (OSERS)
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue S.W.
Washington, DC 20202

Division on Career Development
The Council for Exceptional Children
1920 Association Drive
Reston, VA 22091

Health Resource Center (HEATH)
One Dupont Circle N.W.
Suite 670
Washington, DC 20036-1196

National Information Center for Handicapped Children & Youth (NICHY)
P.O. Box 1492
Washington, DC 20013

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